

# GOD, NO IMPOSTOR NOR DELVDER:

O R,  
AN ANSWER TO A  
Popish and Arminian Cauill, in the  
defence of Free-Will, and vniuersall Grace;  
wherein God's tender of Grace by the outward  
Ministry of the Gospel, to Reprobates who neither doe,  
nor can receiue it; is vindicated from those aspersions  
of equiuocation, falsitie, and collusion, which  
some by way of Obiection, cast vpon it.

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By William Prynne, an vtter Barrester of Lincolnes Inne.

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Numbers. 29. 19.

*God is not a Man that he should lye, neither the Sonne of man that  
he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not doe it? or hath he spoken,  
and shall he not make it good?*

Romans 3. 4.

*Yea let God be true, but euery man a lyer, as it is writen: That  
he mightest be iustified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when  
hou art iudged.*

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NO. 1000  
NORDELVER

AN ANSWER TO A  
QUESTION CONCERNING THE

PROBATION OF A  
WITNESS

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23/4  
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## God no Impostor nor Deluder.

**I**T is a common demand, which the patrons of vniuersall Grace and free will vse to make, how God can be excused from hypocrisie, collusion and deceit, if he hath not seriously purposed and determined to conuert and call all such to whom the Gospell is preached, but only to the elect?

To giue a full, a cleare and satisfactory answer vnto this demand, which stumbles many: We must consider in the first place, that the glad tidings and promises of the Gospell are proper and peculiar to the elect and chosen Saints of God, and not common to the elect and reprobates as the law is, which binds all men alike: Hence is it, that the elect onely are said, \* *to be the children of the promise, the seed of Abraham, and the promise of faith by Iesus Christ*; is said, *to be giuen onely to them which beleeue: (a) The voyce of Christ is proper onely to the sheepe of Christ, who are the elect*: whence the faith of the Gospell is stiled (b) *the faith of Gods elect*; as being proper and peculiar vnto them alone: Christ Iesus hath (c) *bequeathed his Gospell as a peculiar legacie to his Saints and chosen ones*, and deliuered and committed it to them. Wherefore the Apostles did alwaies dedicate and direct their Epistles (d) *to the elect, the chosen and faithfull in Christ Iesus; to the Saints, the sanctified, called and preserued in Christ Iesu, and to no others*: to signifie that the Gospell is proper and peculiar vnto them. Secondly, you must obserue, that though the ministers of the Gospell, are to \* *preach the Gospell to every creature*, yet it is not with an intent to conuert all those that heare it vnto God, but onely the elect: Paul did preach and (e) *indure all things*, not for all those to whom he preached; but onely for the elects sake; that they might obtaine the salvation which is in Christ Iesus with eternall glory: (f) *God hath giuen some to his Apostles*.

\*

some  
\* Rom. 9.7,8.  
Gal. 2.23.  
a Iohn. 10. 3,4,  
27.  
b Tit. 1.1.  
c Iohn. 17. 6,8,  
14, 17, 20, 26,  
Iude 3.  
d Rom. 1. 7. 16,  
1. c. 8. 26 to 35  
1 Cor. 1. 2. 2.  
Cor. 1. 1. Ephe-  
sians. 1. 1. to  
15. c. 2. 1. to the  
end. Phil. 1. 1.  
Col. 1. 1. 1. Thes.  
1. 1. 3. 4. 2. Thes.  
1. 1. 3. ca. 2. 13,  
14. 1. Pet. 1. 1, 10  
24. ca. 2. 7, 9, 10.  
2. Pet. 1. 1, 10.  
2. Ioh. 3. 3. Ioh.  
2. 3. Iude 1, 3.  
Pl. 50. 16, 17.  
2.  
\* Mark. 16. 16.  
2 Tim. 2. 10.  
f Ephe. 4. 11, 12

2 Eph. 1. 3, 5.  
6, 9, 10, 11, 21.  
23. c. 2, 7, 10, 13.  
19, 21, 22. c. 5.  
27, 29, 30.  
1 Pet. 5. 11. Ro.  
8. 29, 30. Hebr.  
12. 22, 23.  
b. Math. 24. 21.  
1 Heb. 1. 14. Rev.  
7. 3, 10. 16.  
k Acts. 10. 28.  
Joh. 21. 15, 16.  
17. 2 Tim. 2. 10.

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1. 16. 15, 16.

m Acts. 13. 48.  
John 10. 26.  
Rom. 8. 30.

some Prophets, some Euangelists, some Pastors and teachers; but this is not for the conuersion and good of all men, but it is onely for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, (g) who are the elect. The preachers of the Gospell who are stiled *Angells*, are sent out onely (h) to gather the elect (not all men) from the foure windes, from the one end of heauen to the other: (i) they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them (and for them only) who shall be heires of saluation; not for reprobates and wicked men: they are onely (k) to feede the Church, the lambs, the sheepe and flocke of Christ; who are onely the elect, as the Scriptures and the Fathers haue defined it: therefore the milke and soode of the word and Gospell is proper and peculiar vnto them. Thirdly, you must take notice, that though the Gospell be to be preached vnto euery creature, yet it is not with an intent to conuert & saue all those that heare it preached, but only true belieners: this is euident by that commission which Christ gaue vnto his Apostles: (l) *Go ye (saith he) into all the world, and preach the Gospell to euery creature, he that belieneth, and is baptized shall bee saued, but hee that belieneth not shall bee damned*: By which conditionall clause and limitation, its most apparant: that God did neuer intend that his Gospell should conuert and saue all such as heare it preached, (as is further warranted by *Ier. 1. 10. cap. 7. 26, 27, 28. Ezech. 2. 3. to 9, 10. Heb. 4. 2. 2 Cor. 2. 14, 15, 16*) where God commanded his word to be preached to some that should not heare it nor obey it, nor reape any profit or conuersion from it: but onely such as should belieue and imbrace it in their hearts. Now these are onely the elect, and no others; for (m) *they onely doe belienue*: Therefore the Gospell is intended vnto them alone.

If this then be granted and yerlded vnto me, that the promises and glad tidings of the Gospell are proper and peculiar to the elect alone; that the ministers of the Gospell are sent out onely to call and gather together the elect; and that the preaching of the Gospell vnto euery creature,

is not with an intent to conuert and saue all such as heare it, but onely such as doe belieue it, who are alwaies the lesser number, and onely such as are elected: then it folloves ineuitably, that there is no repugnancy nor contradiction betweene the secret and the reuealed will of God; and that God deludes and cozens none to whom the Gospell is preached, though they are not conuerted: because he did neuer intend to conuert all those that should be the hearers, but only such as are the true embracers and beleiuers of his Gospell, who are only the elect, in whom alone he workes this grace of faith.

Yea but you will now obiekt; that God doth seriously *Obiect.* exhort and intreate euen reprobates and wicked men to repent and belieue, though he hath determined to giue no faith, nor yet repentance to them: therefore if they cannot reper and belieue of themselves (as we affirme) God cannot but mocke and dissemble with them, because he exhorts them vnto that which they of themselves (without Gods ayde) can neuer doe: and which himselfe hath decreed irreuocably that they shall neuer doe.

To this I answere, that it is true; that if God himselfe *Answ.* who knowes the hearts and estates of all men, should tell any man from heauen that he was a reprobate, and that he had irreuocably decreed it, that he would neuer worke any faith or repentance in him, and should come to such a man in particular, and seriously exhort him to belieue and repent that so he might be saued: that then there were some shew of mockery, falshood and double dealing in God: and this objection might stand good. But here the case stands otherwise: For though God doth oft times seriously exhort and intreate euen such to belieue and repent, as he hath reprobated and for euer reiected in his secret purpose and decree, yet here is no delusion nor deceit at all. First, because the minister who is Gods agent and embassadour vnto this reprobate, can neuer determine whether he be a reprobate yea or no: so that he renders grace and mercy to him, not as to a reprobate or cast a-

2. way; but as to a chosen Saint of God for ought he knowes. Secondly, because this reprobate to whom this exhortation and tender of grace is made, can neuer fully satisfy nor yet resolue himselfe that he is a reprobate, because he was neuer priuy to Gods counsell, and because his whole life is a time of grace to him for ought he knowes. Since then it is neither reuealed to the minister that offers grace, nor yet to him to whom this grace is tendred, that he is a reprobate, and that God hath determined to bestow no grace vpon him; neither the minister, nor yet himselfe can truly say that God doth mocke him or delude him; because that vnto them, and to all other men, there is a possibility, yea and a probability, that this very reprobate may be saued, because he is no reprobate as vnto them, nor yet as to himselfe.

*Obiect. 1.*

Yea, but you will object; that God himselfe doth certainly know that this very reprobate neither will, nor can repent, because he hath decreed to worke no faith nor repentance in him: therefore God must needs delude and mocke him, though man cannot discern it.

*Answer. 1.*

To this I answere; that if man cannot discern, that God deludes men in this his dealing: then how doth it come to passe, that you who prosecute this objection can charge God with delusion, and couenage in his dealing, when as man cannot discern it? what are you now translated into Gods or Angells, that you can fathom and find out this mystery, which all the Saints and reprobates in the world cannot espie. Doubtlesse if there be neuer a reprobate in the world, that can say God deales falsely with him, in desiring his conuersion when as he neuer did intend it, because he could not satisfie himselfe whether he were a reprobate yea or no: then it is certaine, that you who make this mysticall and strange objection, must cease to charge God with collusion and double dealing, till you are able for to taxe him of, or trace him in it. Secondly, though God doth certainly know, that reprobates neither can nor will repent, yet he doth not mocke nor delude

them, by inuiting, exhorting and perswading them to repent; because that as God doth not inuite them to faith and repentance as they are reprobates, so his decree of reprobation is not the immediat cause of their infidelity and impenitency, but their owne corrupt and sinfull natures, which God is not bound to heale and cure. Indeed if God himselfe should purposely bind them hand and foote in the chaines and setters of sinne, and then should bid them go, or walke, and run on towards him in a serious and earnest manner, he might then be thought for to delude them: but this God doth not doe, he casts no rubbes nor bloekes into our way, but what we cast our selues: if we come not in when as he inuites vs, it is not because God himselfe doth not inable vs, but because we haue insnared our selues in sinnes and trespasses, and disabled our selues to come vnto him as we ought: so that here wee must accuse our selues, not God. Thirdly, when God doth offer grace vnto vs, we must know, that he doth not immediately infuse this grace into vs, but he workes it in vs by the vse of meanes: now God when as he offers grace to reprobates, they alwaies slight, neglect and vilify the meanes by which God offers and conueyes his grace; so that if they misse of grace (as they alwaies doe) they cannot lay the blame on God, or say, that hee did not intend for to conuert them; but they must take the blame vpon themselves; because if they had vsed the meanes with care and conscience as they ought, and done that which was requisite on their parts, God would haue wrought effectually by his spirit in their hearts for ought that they could tell, or thinke to the contrary. Fourthly, when God doth seriously and earnestly inuite vs to repentance and true sauing faith; he doth not alwaies promise and resolute to worke this faith and repentance in our hearts, (for then they should be alwaies wrought effectually in vs, because Gods purposed and resolued will is *\* alwaies executed, and cannot be resisted*;) but he doth only seriously declare what things he doth approue and require in vs. A King may seriously

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\* Gen. 18. 14.  
c. 17. 1. c. 3. 11  
1 Chron 19. 17.  
12. 2. Chro. 20.  
6, 7. Job. 12. 13.  
to the end. c. 9.  
4. to 10. cap. 23.  
13. 14. c. 33. 12.  
13. c. 37. 7. 12.  
c. 40. 9. c. 42. 2.  
Pl. 47. 3. P. 115  
3. Psal 135. 6.  
Prou. 21. 1. 30.  
Beckel. 9. 1. 1. fal.  
4. 17. c. 40. 10.  
2. 18. 21. 10. 20.  
c. 43. 13. Jer. 18.  
3. to 11. cap. 31.  
27. c. 49. 19. E.  
zech. 32. 14.  
Dan 2. 20. 27.  
c. 43. 5. c. 5. 19.  
Acta 5. 39. c. 6.  
10. c. 11. 17. Ro.  
9. 19. 20. 21.  
Job 5. 21. 2. Cor  
10. 4. 5. Eph. 1.  
11. 19. 20. 21.

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with

with and desire that such a subject of his were a rich, a great and honourable person, but yet he may not purpose and resolute to make him such a one: God doth earnestly command and desire that all men (but especially his Saints) should not offend nor sinne against him; but yet he doth not purpose to cause them not to sinne: for *\* in many things wee offend all; and there is no man that liueth, and sinneth not*: God may desire something in his reuealed will, which he hath not purposed nor decreed to effect and worke in his secret will: he (*u*) *desires not the death of a sinner*; and yet sinners alwaies die in sinne, without repentance: since therefore God may desire and require something in his reuealed will, which he hath not purposed nor decreed to effect in his secret will; it followes not, that God doth therefore intend and purpose to worke effectually by his grace in hypocrites and reprobates, when as hee offers grace and mercy by his word: and so he mockes them not. Fifthly. the Gospell in which God offers grace to men, though it bee propounded in a common and vniuersall manner in respect of the hearing of it, from which none are excluded; yet it is alwaies propounded distributively, restrictiuely and conditionally in respect of the benefit and comfort of it; not to men as they are men; nor to all hearers or reprobates, as they are hearers and reprobates; but to all those, and to those onely that shall beleue it, embrace it, and obey it in the syncerity of their hearts. If then the Gospell be thus preached and propounded to a whole congregation, can any man say that God deludes him? If he will beleue and apply the Gospell, he shall be sure to reape the fruite and comfort of it; and so he cannot accuse God of collusion, because he hath made good his Gospell vnto him: If he beleue and receiue it not at all, he cannot say that God deludes him, or that he did not offer it seriously vnto him; because he propounded it with this prouiso, if he would beleue and apply it to his owne eternall good; which prouiso and condition he hath not yet fulfilled: and therefore he cannot blame the Lord, who did

\* James 3. 2.  
2 Chron. 6. 36.

u Ezech. 18. 23,  
32.



not promise to fulfill it for him.

Yea but say you, a reprobate may thus object: I cannot receiue nor beleiue the Gospell vnlesse God giue mee an heart and will to doe it, which heart and will he hath not determined to giue me; therefore he doth but delude and cozen me in profering grace vnto me vpon such impossible termes and conditions as these, which I cannot performe.

I answere, that it is true, that God must giue men hearts to imbrace and vse the meanes of grace in an effectual manner, or else they cannot doe it: yet this I say with all; that euen reprobates themselues might haue done more, then now they doe, and beene more diligent in the outward meanes, had they put their whole might and strength vnto it, and prayed earnestly to God for his assistance: so that they cannot truly say, that God was wanting vnto them in altering of their hearts; but that they were wanting to themselues, in being negligent in the vse of meanes, and in blocking vp their hearts against the Lord by daily sinnes. Secondly, that inability to beleiue; and vse the meanes of grace which is in reprobates, proceedes not from any decree or act of God, but from reprobates themselues. God made man able at the first to do his will, and to vse the means of grace, which liberty mankind hath wholly and justly lost in Adams fall: since therefore that impotency and impossibility of getting and receiuing grace which is in reprobates, proceedes not from any fatall or necessitating decree of God, but onely from that originall deprauation and naturall imbecillity which is in them; from which God is not pleased for to free them: these reprobates cannot say, that God deludes and mocks them in tendering grace vnto them, though he denies them hearts and wills for to imbrace it; which he is not bound in justice for to giue them: but they must rather magnify his mercy towards them in offering grace vnto them, when as they haue made themselues vnworthy of it, and vnable to receiue it. Thirdly, what reprobate is there that when

*Obiect.*

*Answer, 1.*

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God doth offer grace vnto him by his ministers, can truly say that God hath positiuely resolu'd nor to giue him an heart or will for to imbrace it? Is any reprobate priuie vnto Gods decrees, to know what he hath purposed concerning him? if not, then he can neuer say that God deludes him, or that he decrees to giue him no heart nor will to imbrace the grace which is thus tendred to him; because for ought he knowes, he may belong to Gods election: and if so, then God will surely change his heart, and giue him power to imbrace his grace. Fourthly, if God should offer grace to reprobates in a serious manner, yet he should not delude them, though he giues them no power to receiue it: because there is in reprobates such a loue of sinne, and such an hatred, and violent antipathie against grace and holinesse, that they would be (o) *utterly unwilling to receive this grace vpon those termes that God doth offer it, although they had power to imbrace it*: Reprobates though they might haue grace for the very taking of it, yet they would not take it though they might vpon Gods conditions: therefore God doth not delude them in tendring grace vnto them, though they cannot take it; because they would not take it though they might. Fifthly, God doth not mocke nor yet delude these reprobates in offering grace vnto them by the ministrie of the Gospell, though he neuer inclines their hearts and wills to imbrace it in a saving manner: because they haue many priuiledges, benefits, and aduantages by the Gospell, though their hearts are not conuerted nor reformed by it. For first by this profer of the Gospell to them, they haue alwayes something to support their soules from sinking in despaire; they haue alwaies a possibility, a hope and probability of their true conuersion and saluation, which those who are depriv'd of the Gospell want; whence they are said to be (p) *aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope*: Reprobates who liue vnder the Gospell haue alwaies hope till their dying day, because they know not whether they are reprobates yea or no till then,

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See Ioh. 18. 40.  
 Mathe. 22. 5, 6.  
 ca. 2. 37. Luke  
 13. 3. 46. 19, 15.  
 27. Act. 3. 14. 5.  
 7. 51. ca. 13. 45.  
 46. Iohn 1. 19.  
 30. ca. 1. 10, 11.

5

7.

p Ephes. 2. 12.

then; which hope and comfort all such as are deprived of the Gospell want: therefore the preaching of the Gospell to them is not meere y vaine. Secondly, Reprobates who enjoy the Gospell, haue a more cleere distinct and full apprehension of God, both in his essence and his glorious attributes, then those who are deprived of the Gospell haue: they know the will and workes of God, the worth, the nature, dignity and excellency of Christ and of his merits, and of the gifts and graces of his spirit: yea they (q) *tast a sweetnesse in the word and promises, and in the powers of the world to come*: they know more then all the world besides, which is deprived of the Gospell: now the very knowledge of God and Christ, and of their attributes, promises, word and will, and of all those things which the Scriptures doe reueale vnto reprobates, is an vnualueable and matchlesse blessing; it is a greater good and happinesse then man by all the light of art and nature (without the Scriptures) can attaine vnto: therefore no reprobates can say that God deales hardly or falsly with them though his word doth not conuert them. Thirdly, Reprobates though they are not conuerted by the Gospell, haue alwaies as (r) *great* (nay sometimes a greater) *share and portion in those outward blessings and priuiledges which the Gospell brings (which are great and many) as the Saints themselues*: The Gospell commonly brings peace and plenty, health and safety, and all outward happinesse and tranquillity with it: it is alwaies accompanied with many great and excellent blessings of which reprobates drinke as deepe as any others: therefore it is not altogether in vaine vnto them, though it conuert them not. Fourthly, Reprobates though they are not truly sanctified nor called by the Gospell, yet many of them haue oft times many morrall, outward and commendable vertues, gifts and graces wrought within them by it: Againe, many of them are oft times ciuized, curbed, rectified and reformed by it, so that they runne not into the same excessse of sinne and wickednesse as else they would, by which it comes to passe that their eternall torments

q Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

3.  
r Iob. 21. 7. to  
17. Psal. 73. 3. to  
13.

3.

f Mark. 6. 10.

Matth. 7. 22.

See Mr. Perkins  
how far a repro-  
bate may goe.

6.

f Gen 30. 30. e.

39. 5. 2. 23.

7 Gen. 18. 23. 10

33.

7.

ments in hell fire are much extenuated and abated : there-  
fore they cannot truly say , that the Gospell is ineffectuall  
and fruitlesse to them, because their very soules reape much  
aduantage by it. Filthly, Reprobates haue oft times many  
sodaine, transitory and flashy joyes, and many good moti-  
tions, purposes and resolutions wrought within them by  
the word ; yea the word of God is sometimes so preualent  
and poweriull in their soules, that it makes them to doe  
(f) *many things* for God, and to goe very farre in the out-  
ward practise and profession of religion; insomuch that  
they seeme to many to be the elect of God, and the vn-  
doubted members of Iesus Christ: so that the Gospell is  
not altogether in vaine vnto them, because it workes some  
good vpon them, though it conuert them not. Sixthly, Re-  
probates by meanes and vertue of the Gospell which is  
preached to them, doe injoy the society and company of  
Gods elect and chosen Saints, by meanes of whom their  
soules and bodies doe oft times fare the better. Its no small  
benefit or blessing to injoy the company of Gods elect:  
for as their company is louely, comfortable, sweete, a-  
miable, innocent, mild and harmelesse; so it is a meanes  
of keeping many judgements from, and pulling downe  
many blessings vpon reprobates and cast-awayes: It is  
common in the Scriptures, and ordinary in experience,  
that God sometimes (s) blesseth reprobates, and (v) keeps  
of judgements from them for the godly mens sake that  
liue among them: wherefore though the Gospell doth  
not conuert them to the Lord, yet it is not in vaine vnto  
them euen in this respect. Seuently, Reprobates who  
liue vnder the Gospell are sometimes made the instruments  
and meanes of good to others, and the furtherers of Gods  
glory, though they doe no good to themselues: Kings,  
ministers, magistrates, schollers of all sorts, artificers, and  
the like, though they are such as God hath rejected, are  
oft times made the instruments of much good vnto the  
Saints, the executioners of Gods will, and the aduancers  
of his glory; which brings much joy and comfort to them  
for

for the present, and gaines respect and honour to them in the sight of men: since therefore reprobates injoy so many blessings, priuiledges and comforts by the Gospell as these here mentioned, they haue no cause to say that God deludes and mockes them, when as he sends the Gospell to them; because though he giues no inward efficacy nor power to it, to conuert and saue their soules, yet he deriues many outward blessings, comforts, priuiledges and fauors to them by it, for which their soules and bodies fare the better.

If you now object, that the Gospell aggravates the sins *Obiect.* of reprobates, and makes their condemnation greater, because it leaues them without excuse: therefore they are no gainers, but losers by the Gospell.

I answere, that it is true, that it had bin better for some *Answ.* reprobates, yea for all those reprobates that goe on in sinfull and rebellious courses without restraint, that they had neuer injoyd the Gospell by reason of their disobedience to it: but as for others who are reclaimed by it, though it aggravates their condemnation one way, in adding to the greauesse of their sins; yet it extenuates it another way, in detracting from the multitude and number of their sinnes, which they would haue doubled and trebled, had not the ministry and preaching of the word restrained them: so that they are farre greater gainers in this last respect, then losers by the first: All reprobates fare the better for the Gospell here, in regard of those many outward blessings and priuiledges that accompany it; many of them speede the better for it not onely here but hereafter to: those that fare the worsen for it, it is from their owne defaults, they might haue vsed it better if they would themselues, in hauing more care and conscience to practise and obey it: so that the Gospell is a blessing to them all, though it proues a curse and condemnation vnto them through their own defaults. Lastly, though God doth not giue men power to helciue and receiue his Gospell, yet he doth not delude them though he offers it vnto them with a desire that they should

should receiue it: for as God doth not delude men in in-  
 joyning them not to sinne, and to obserue his law in eu-  
 ery point, though he giues them no power nor strength to  
 doe it, and though it be *impossible for them to fulfill it*, no  
 more can he be said to delude or mocke men in offering  
 grace vnto them by the Gospell, though he giues them  
 no power to receiue it: because hee commands them no  
 more then they had strength at first to doe, which strength  
 and power they lost through their owne defaults: and be-  
 cause the end of this command is to no other purpose but  
 to cause men fort to see their owne disability, and so to fly  
 to him for strength, for grace and mercy.

*Quest.*

But you will now demand of me, if the Gospell doth  
 truly and of right belong to none but the elect, if it con-  
 uerts and saues none else but they, why then is it pro-  
 pounded so generally to all, to reprobates as well as others?  
 If it were proper and peculiar to the elect alone, it should  
 be preached to none else but they.

*Answer.*

To this I answer, that the Gospell is thus generally pro-  
 pounded vnto all, not because it belongs alike to all, or  
 because God intends that it should be alike effectuell vnto  
 all; but because it is the will, the pleasure and command  
 of God, that it should be thus propounded: as is euident  
 by *Marke 16.16. Luke 10.5, 6. cap. 24.47. Matth. 13.3. to 24.*  
*Acts 1.8. Col. 1.6.21.* Now the reasons wherefore the Gos-  
 pell is thus generally propounded vnto all, though it be  
 principally intended for the conuersion and saluation of  
 the elect alone, are these. First, because reprobates are (a)  
*intermixed* and mingled with the elect, as the weedes and  
 tares are with the corne and grasse, as the chaffe is with  
 the wheate, and as the stones are with the mellow ground:  
 now as the rain doth oftimes fall vpon the tares, the weedes  
 and stones, as well as on the corne, the grasse, and mellow  
 ground, not because it is principally intended vnto them;  
 but because they are intermixed with the grasse, the corne,  
 and fertile ground: and as the *\*fannes* doth blow vpon the  
 chaffe as well as on the whear, because it is mixed with the  
 whear,

2.  
 \* Matth. 13.24.  
 to the end.

\* Matth. 3.12.

wheate, though *it scatters the one, and purgeth the other*: Euen so the pleasant showers and breathings of the Gospell doe oft times ( *b* ) fall on reprobates and wicked men, ( who are compared to weedes, to tares, to rockes, and chaffe throughout the Scripture ) not with a determinate purpose to conuert and saue them; but because they are mingled with the elect and chosen Saints of God, ( who are compared to wheate, to corne, to good and mellow ground, ) for whose effectuall calling and conuersion they are only sent. Secondly, the Gospell is thus generally propounded to all that will imbrace it, and not to the elect alone; because the ministers of the Gospell being but fraile and silly men as others are, and not able to discerne into the secret counsell and decree of God, cannot distinguish betweene the elect and reprobates: \* If the ministers could discerne betweene the elect and reprobates, betweene those that would imbrace and willingly receiue the Gospell, and such as would reject it, they might then propound the Gospell to the elect alone; but because they know not who are chosen and elected, nor who are reprobated: therefore they must preach the Gospell vnto all, that so those who are elected may be effectually called and conuerted out of all. Thirdly, the Gospell must be thus propounded, because else it would be vaine and ineffectuall vnto all; for if the Gospell should be pronounced to the elect alone, ( as he that is elected shall be saued; ) then no man could apply it to his owne soule; for before a mans conuersion vnto God, he can neuer truly say that he is elected: yea the very elect themselues can neuer say that they are elected, till they find the blessed fruites of election in their hearts, which are wrought by the preaching of the word: so that if the Gospell should be preached to the elect alone, it would be ineffectuall, vaine and idle; because no man could then apply it to himselfe: therefore it is propounded generally vnto all, that so men might be able to apply it. Fourthly, the Gospell must be thus propounded, that so no man whyles he liueth here might haue cause to despaire of Gods mercy:

b Heb. 6. 4. to 9.  
Mar. 13. 3. to 24

\* August. de Civ.  
Dei lib. 21. c. 24.  
Si de aliquibus in  
ta Ecclesia certa  
esset, ut quis suus  
illi asiam nosset,  
qui licet adhuc  
in vita sine con  
stitui, tamen  
predeterminati sunt  
in eternum igne  
ire cum Diabolo:  
tunc pro eis non  
oraret, quam nec  
pro ipso &c.

3.

c Hebr. 4. 2. 2.

4.  
d 1 Pet. 1. 13.



mercy: If God should cull out his elect from among the reprobates, and make an open division and separation of them here, preaching the Gospell vnto them alone, then all these reprobates must needs despaire of his grace, and runne into some desperate course, knowing that they are designed and marked out for hell: but now when as the Gospell is thus generally propounded vnto all, it alwaies nourisheth some hope in reprobates, and keeps them from despaire.

5.

*8 Rom. 1. 20 Ezech 2. 5, Iohn 15. 22. Math. 10. 18. cap. 24. 14. 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16.* Fifthly, the Gospell is thus generally preached vnto all, that is to reprobates who wilfully disobey, reject, and slight it, (e) may be left without excuse, laying all the blame vpon themselves, and not on God, who was not wanting to them in the meanes. Sixthly, the Gospell is thus generally propounded vnto all, though it becomes

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*f 1 Pet. 2. 9. Eph. 1. 5, 6, 11, 12.* not effectually vnto all, because the Saints of God who are conuerted by it, may haue greater cause to loue, to blisse and praise the Lord for making it effectually vnto them, when as he hath not made it so to others. Seuenthly, it is

7.

*g Gal 6. 16. Ro. 3. 27. cap. 7. 25. Plal. 119. 9.* thus propounded vnto all, because it is a (g) rule of life to reprobates as well as others, though it be no salue nor plaister to them for to heale their soules: the Gospell though it workes not grace in all, yet it is a square and rule of life to all that heare it; and it is that by which they shall

*h Iohn. 12. 48. Rom. 2. 12, 16.* be iudged at the last: wherefore though it be effectually to none but the elect, yet it must be preached vnto all alike, because it is a rule and square of life and judgement vnto all.

8.

*i See Ephes. 7. 7. to 11. Phil 2. 9, 10, 11. 2 Cor. 2. 14, 15, 16.* Eighthly, it is thus propounded vnto all, (i) that so the riches of Gods loue and mercy to mankind in Iesus Christ his sonne, and all his great and glorious attributes, together with the mysteries of saluation, and his reuealed will, might be more publickly knowne, manifested and reuealed to the sons of men, to the glory and praise of God: the

*k 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15, 16.* more the Gospell is spread abroad, the (k) more God and Christ are glorified though it conuerts not all; because it doth more propagate and divulge those great, those glorious attributes & treasures of goodnesse which are in them, and wins them a greater, a more awfull and commanding

reuerence



reuerence and adoration in the hearts of men: therefore it is thus preached vnto all. Ninthly, it is propounded vnto all because it workes effectually on many reprobates, though not to turne them wholly and fully to the Lord, yet to conuert them from their *(1)* *atheisme, their paganism, idolatries*, prophane and dissolute courses, and from many other sins, into which they would haue plunged themselves, had not the Gospell pulled them backe: we know it by experience, that the Gospell workes very far on many reprobates; it makes them *(n)* *do much, and part with many sins*: and though it neuer workes so farre as thorowly to change and saue their soules, yet it brings them nearer to saluation then else they could haue come: it makes their condemnation lesse by lessening of the number of their sins. Tenthly, the Gospell must be thus propounded, that so those reprobates that heare it might *(n)* *enioy the outward blessings* and priuiledges which it brings, as well as the elect: which they could neuer do, if it were propounded to the elect alone. Eleuenthy, the Gospell is thus propounded vnto all, that to reprobates as well as others might *(o)* *bear witness to it*, and *(p)* *acknowledge God and Iesus Christ as well as others*: It the Gospell had bin preached to the elect alone, then many who professe the Gospell acknowledging the deity of God and Christ, and the truth and holiness of the Gospell, had layen still in darknesse, and in their heathenish rites, and superstitious worshipping of Diuells, stockes, stones, and other creatures for Gods, and imbracing fabulous, blasphemous, absurd and idle poems and histories of their Idoll-Gods, for sound diuinity; by which the glory of God and Christ, and the truth and testimony of the Gospell should haue bin much eclipsed: God therefore commands the Gospell to be propounded vnto all, and not to the elect alone, that so all men might come to the acknowledgement of his truth and deity, for the greater manifestation of his glory. Twelfthly, the Gospell is thus propounded vnto all, that so reprobates as well as others might be *(q)* *convinced* of their own weaknesse, wretchednesse and peruerfenesse in Gods sight, and acknowledge that he

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1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 1. 9. 10

10 Marke 6. 10.

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11 Math 5. 25.

11.

12 Math. 24. 14.

13 1<sup>st</sup> Tim. 2. 4.

14 Coloss 1. 6. 13.

15 Math. 24. 14.

12.

16 Rom. 7. 7. 8. 9

17 to 17. Jer. 3. 25.

18 Ioh. 9. 41. c. 10.

19 8. 9. Rom. 3. 19.

20 Math. 23. 4.

deales

r Pl. 64. 8. 9. Pl.  
58. 11. Exod. 9.  
27. Ezech. 14.  
22. 23.  
f Math. 22. 13.

13.  
g 1 Cor. 11. 27.  
28. 29. 30.

14.  
v Rom. 1. 16.  
AAs 11. 24.  
w 2 Cor. 2. 15.  
16.  
n 1 Cor. 1. 18.  
21. cap. 2. 5. cap.  
4. 15. James 1.  
18. Col. 1. 12.  
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y 2 Cor. 2. 16.  
z 1 say. 6. 9. 10.  
Ezech. 2. 10.  
Ioh. 15. 12. Ro.  
2. 20.

deales justly in rejecting them, and in inflicting vengeance on them for their sins: when a reprobate by the light of Gods holy word shall see what he hath lost in *Adam*, and what corruption he hath drawne from his loynes; when he shall discover by the brightnesse of the word, the greatnesse bulke and infinire multitude of his sins; then he is euen forced (r) to confesse, that God deales justly with him: then his conscience stops his mouth and makes him (s) speechlesse; so that he hath nothing to reply against God; but willingly submits vnto his doome, as being scarce proportionable to his sinne: so that there is great reason why the Gospell should be thus propounded vnto all, though it conuersts not all that heare it. Thirteenthly, the Sacraments are administered vnto all, to (t) reprobates as well as to the elect: reprobates are baptized, and receiue the Sacrament of the Lords supper as well as any of Gods chosen ones: it is fit therefore that the Gospell should be extended vnto all as well as the Sacraments, because they are both of the same extent and latitude, and goe hand in hand together, like twins that cannot be diuided. Lastly, the Gospell is thus propounded vnto all, because it hath a seuerall effect in all; though not to saue & conuert all those that heare it: To the elect, it is the (v) power of God to saluation, (w) the fauour of life vnto life, & the effectuall (x) means of their true conuersion & saluation: to the wicked (y) it is the fauour of death vnto death, the rule of life and judgement, the declaration of Gods will and pleasure, the cause (z) of times of their obduration & greater condemnation, by reason of their contempt and neglect of it. Since therefore the Gospell hath a work in reprobates as well as in the elect, it is propounded to them both; yet not as vnto elect and reprobates, nor in absolute & positive terms, but as to men who are capable of grace & saluation, if they repent, & belieue that Gospell which is preached to them, and of damnation if they do reject it: And thus you see this grand objection cleared, That God is no deluder nor impostor, though he hath not purposed nor decreed to conuert and call all such to whom the Gospell is preached.

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